



The Omen 39:3

"THE JOB ONLY YOU CAN DO."

Omen Layout Staff: A Tragi-Comedy in Three Parts

Dramatis Personae: In Order of Klout Score

Grace "My Name Isn't Spelled That Way" Willey
as The Can-Do Hero
Jon "Omen Kid" Gardner
as A Shark
Rachel "Moral Compass" Ithen
as Phil Ochs
Stephen "The Graduate" Morton
as Twelve Dancing Princesses
F. "My First Name is Digitally Available" Stewart-Taylor
as Old Man Smithers
Will "Where There's a Way" Shattuc
as Wil Wheaton
Alex "Bearcouter" Vercoutere
as At Least Two Bears
Rachel "Here For the Food" Skorupka
as a Plague of Locusts
Devin "Philosophy Rob Zombie" Morse
as Himself

And a Star-Studded Cast of YOUR SUBMISSIONS!
Lies-AerialNavigation.Poems.NoFreedom.DemureProposition.ArthurBird.
Hate- 10Reasons.AgainstSocialJustice.DearFolks.
Speak- Context.FacebookSuicide.DearSigners.Caption.
Sealand.
Mail.ReAbout

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu or F. Stewart-Taylor, box 1092

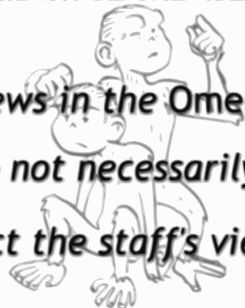
Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Thursday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Thursdays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

THE OFFICIAL OMEN HAIKU:



Views in the Omen (5)
Do not necessarily (7)
Reflect the staff's views (5)

Front Cover Will "Sham-Wow" Shattuc
Back Cover Evan "Shampoo" Silberman

EDITORIAL

The Omen in 2112

by Rachel Ithen

Howdy folks, and welcome to yet another lovely edition of Hampshire's free speech publication, the Omen. I'm thrilled to see so many folks (especially those who are not regularly affiliated with the Omen) submitting their lists, poems, homework, and more. Srsly though, the next step is just to come hang out with us on alternate Thursdays. But don't stop submitting! We love that too.

This week's editorial is inspired by something that our own Omen Kid (Omen Guy? Omen Dude?) Jon Gardner dug up and has subsequently published in bits and pieces in this issue.

Without further ado, I present predictions about the Omen in the year 2112, as told by folks at Omen layout, 10/11/12.

Will: All digital.

Grace: Same as it ever was.

Fiona: Stephen will still be here. Stephen will be the only person left. The rest of the world will have died and it's just Stephen Morton on like an Apple 2GS laying it out with fucking, uh... that thing where you move the fucking turtle around?

Stephen: Logo.

Fiona: Logo, yeah. You're gonna be doing the Omen entirely on Logo and it's gonna be amazing.

Alex: There will be a single basement in a (?) land of pot smoke and opiate ashes, and in there they will find this and think this is a significant cultural archive of

some sort of ritual gathering for a soulful community.

Grace: It's the Library of Alexandria.

Will: Roberta will still be mad at us.

Fiona: It's gonna be Roberta outside of the basement, Stephen inside on a 2GS laying out on Logo and Roberta's just gonna be screaming at him. Oh, people will come in to find, y'know, Stephen who has lost all verbal communication since he's wasting away [...] presumably they're gonna assume the Climax is a holy text of some sort which really concerns me [...] but hopefully they'll find some of the Climax/Omen war, which we refer to as a war... oh God I really hope they find the Nemo and believe that it is literally true. [...]

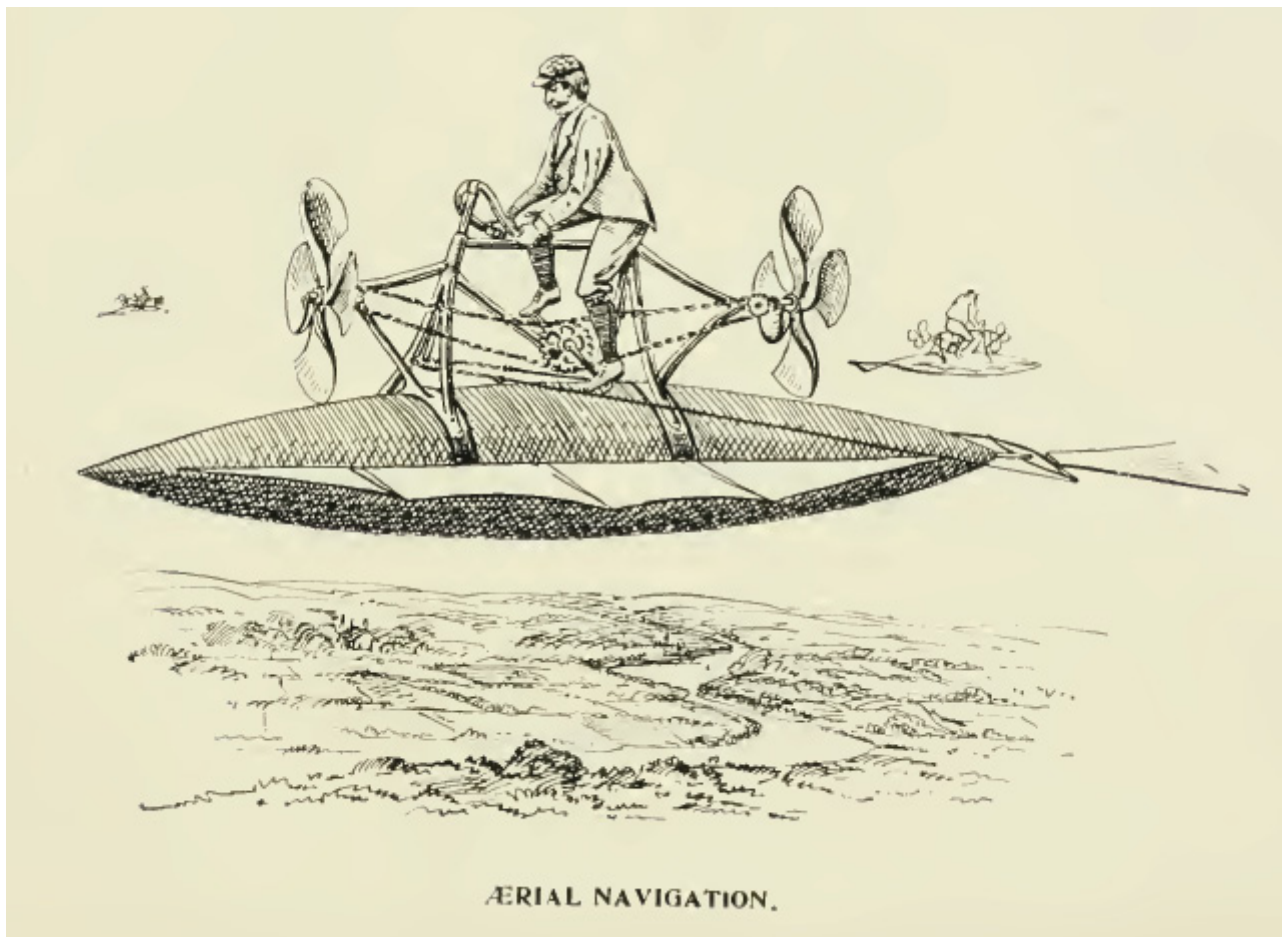
Will: We'll have discovered the cure for the common cold and will have printed it first, here.

You know the deal, folks. Alternate Thursdays (specific dates on our Hampedia page) at 8pm in the Merrill A Basement. Submit things to omen@hampshire.edu. The Omen loves you. Come cure the common cold with us.

<3



SECTION : LIES



Submitted by Jonathan Gardner (Section Editor)

Sense in the World/We Would Buy the Problem: Poems Directly from the October 3rd, 2012 Presidential Debate

by Shea Sweeney

I want to make
The luckiest man on Earth
Want to wish, Sweetie.

For your hospitality
Make tonight, but the most important
On Earth because Michelle Obama
agreed.

And by the way, I like coal.
People in the coal industry feel
America and North America energy.

I believe that we
The middle class is doing well
Those tax cuts, they had
In their pockets, and so
Buy a new car.
They are position to whether the
Recession that we went
A new computer for their
College, which means
Money, business
Business makes more
More workers.

I know
Mate keeps saying
Popular thing to say
I'm used to people
Not always true, but
And ultimately
That is not
Will not reduce the
Americans.

Blowing up our deficit to make
Science and research, all the things that
are helping America grow.

The approach that I'm talking about.
Surplus. And businesses

Approach more likely to create
The economy works best when
They've got some money in their
pockets,
Because of this magnificent country
Make sure we're not blowing up.

Look at history.
Down rates,
So the revenue stays.

They're suffering in this country.
And
Four years. It's absolutely
Stopped looking for work in this
Office, 32 million people on
This year slower than last.

And the question,
First because the president went
first
Differences between the two
Problem in this country?

I think it's not just
Not moral for my
Knowing these burdens are
To be paying the interest and
The principle all their lives.

So how do we deal with it?
Deficit. One, of course
Grow the economy
And you can get the job done that
way.

The president would
With raising taxes
Job done. I want to.

Eliminate all programs by
Borrowing money from

Get rid of it. Obamacare's on
my list.

Mr. President. I use that term.
I like it.
Good, Ok, good.
Jim, I'm going to stop
Big Bird. Actually like
On things to borrow.
Take programs
At the state level and send
Number three, I'll make
government.

I walked into the Oval Office
And we know where it came
from:
Tax cuts that were not paid for
Then a massive economic crisis.

So 77 government programs,
Weren't working very well
Were well-intentioned,
Medicare and Medicaid.

Governor, what about Simpson-
Bowles?
Simpson-Bowles.
No, I mean,
I have my own plan.

Donald Trump. It's not just
Donald
One-quarter of the workers
Kill jobs.

Spain spends
42 percent
I want to go down the path
Because they're working.

Younger people,
Thought about one
Proposing any changes
He's not.

For
This
Will affect you.

The idea,

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We would
Buy
The problem.

In fairness,
Alongside it.
Companies are pretty clever
Leaving the older,
It says, over time,
Collapse.

ExxonMobil needs some extra
Pump? Why wouldn't we want
Breaks for corporate jets?
My attitude is
Pay full freight, not get a special break.

Moving a plant overseas.
And all that raises
That then allows us to
In Las Vegas,
The first two weeks
Get reassigned. They're using text.

Las Vegas, a wonderful young lady,
Two weeks she's got them,
Reassigned. They're using text books that
are
10 years old.

Governors are creative.
Make up for 30 percent
Some people end up not getting help.
Jim, let's - we've gone
Medicaid to schools.
Come back.

When this idea was floated
Democrats - said, please let us do that
More effective a way than having
One of the magnificent things about this
country.

States are the laboratories of democracy.
What kind of training programs they have
Have. Let states do this.

Entitlements. First
Major difference between

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A somewhat similar
Have to be tweaked
But it is – the basic.

Grandmother at the mercy of the private
Most in need of decent health
This is not my own – only my.

That's a big topic.
Is that a separate topic?
Yeah, we're going to – yeah.
I'm sorry.
All I want.

Before we leave the economy
Let's get back to Medicare.
The president said
All right.
If that's the case,
Wait a minute, Governor.

All right.
Between the two
Absolutely.
Of you on Medicare?
Absolutely.
Absolutely.

As a businessperson,
You couldn't have people
I mean, you have to have.

Reckless behavior
On Wall Street. You had loan officers
Shouldn't have been given,
Borrowing money to buy a house.

Is it excessive now,
In some places, yes.
Like where?
No, it can become out.

Sense in the world.
Well, here's a specific...
But let's – let's mention –
No, let's not.

Sorry, but that's just not –
Wall Street.

Too big to fail and give them
Dodd-Frank.
Because it's killing.

It was families
All across the country.
They had a pre-existing condition.

More customers.
But can't detail
He did in Massachusetts
With the preexisting condition
problem.

Stronger, more vibrant
A terrific segue to our next
Role of government. And it is –
Do you believe there's a
fundamental
Mission of the government?

Genius of America
Can go out there
But as Abraham Lincoln
understood
In the middle of the Civil War
Railroad, let's start.
Because we want to give
All Americans
People's freedom. That enhances
it.

100,000 math and science
teachers
Our people are skilled and able
to succeed.

Government is
Liberty. We have
A military
The strength.

The Constitution
Is to promote and protect
We have a responsibility
Second to none. I do not believe
in
America's military.

Our creator
And

Our creator with the right
Sure that those
By one another.

Maintaining for individuals
Substitute itself for the rights
View, a – trickle-down
It can do a better job than free people.

The proof
In poverty. The proof
Food stamps. The proof
Work.

Food stamps
College graduates
Not working.

Significant role to play.
Republican and Democrat.

Gentlemen.
You're entitled
To your own
To cut education
Planning on
The place you put your money.

My philosophy
As they're advancing
Opportunity to the middle class.
That's how we cut
That's how we signed
Sell more American products
That's how we ended the war.

To – to – to folks
Had some fights.

Everybody's getting a fair share
Playing by the same rules
I'm not a perfect man.

Mr. President.
Be the vice
Kentucky.
Good night.

No Freedom

by Matthew Walsh

I am dreaming of a crass stage.
Reality dubiously created- recorded
Art, given all the vapid democracy of consumer choice.
Prepare a performance for this idle idolatry
Whose time has come
And will go, by commercial break.

Cameras roll
And so does my tongue
Writing lines of poetry down living paper
Which is at first empty
But fills with a thousand orgasmic onomatopoeias
Onomatahhh

Onoma

Ono

On

On, on- it stretches

And fetches, a high price for insecurity
And this I cry is redemption

"Let my fingernails scrape a prayer
Down the back of my collective readership
And it will read dirty,
As a prose for dancing with your
Eyes closed
To a song about restraint.
And we all yearn for the freedom of such
Wholly holy ironic desecration."

But our will is not free
But bound
To disease, class and propriety.

My pillow talk
Is a coming down
to a scuttling reality
to and fro

And up and down
And have you found
The Drowned and The Saved?
Or do you believe the coroners report
That said he was lost years before his fall?
And maybe Primo thought he could fly
But our will is not free.
And the sky is as far from our reach
As our absolution.

My work has fallen asleep against
The chest of my monologue
And the show switches to credits
And credits the teleprompter which forgot to make its bow.


But I'd gone off script anyway
And it's not as if anyone watches
Reality T.V shows
To hear anything unscripted.

A Demure Proposition

by Aaron Neiman

Invocation

*O, great Muses that art in ethereal Heaven
I prithee, crank this essay up to eleven.
For mortals to grasp this, I require divine intervention
Or maybe, at least, an honourable mention?
Yes, this essay lacks kennings, and medias res,
And you'll find it quite wanting for frills and lace.
But for it to be met with approval and nods,
I humbly ask for the support of the Gods.*

I am quite certain that my voice echoes that of millions
when I assert that in this great nation of ours, the land of the free,
 the home of the brave, and personal favorite of Jesus Christ, there at
one time existed schools that served as paragons of discipline, moral
rectitude, and mutual respect. Yet my voice also joins the chorus of

the masses when I declare that the aforementioned glory of yesteryear has long since evaporated. In its place, we find a festering, putrid filth-pile of amorality and unkindness that defines the tragic current state of our schools. For parents searching for a nurturing and kind institution in which their burgeoning young scholar might learn and grow, seek no further, for I assure you your sojourn will prove fruitless. For, I dare to so boldly declare, not a single school in this God-blessed land remains uninfected by the virulent strain of harassment that mutates and grows every day.

Being, of course, a man in possession of considerable brains and even more considerable concern for American children, I have poured a not insubstantial amount of time and resources into finding a tonic to counteract this veritable bullying epidemic. An old friend of mine, who happens to be an expert on juvenile social issues and has several advanced degrees in said area of study from numerous prestigious institutions, has submitted to me the statistic that in perhaps twenty-seven out of every thirty bullying, teasing, and harassment cases, the miserable atarget of the perpetrator is the empirical cause. From both my own research, as well as the extensive studies done by my colleague, I have gleaned that it is not the "browbeaters", but their selfish victims that have turned the schools of this God-fearing nation into hostile breeding grounds for interpersonal discord. The misleadingly-titled "victims" of bullying need not look further than themselves for a solution to the problem. Had these miserable wretches not possessed qualities so deplorable and mock-worthy, there would remain no reason for the hostility to continue.

I submit, therefore, that it would be in the best interests of all parties involved to assemble thrice weekly, so as to give the meek and comically deformed an opportunity to improve themselves, and further conform to the idealistic image of their stronger, smarter superiors. Having run through multiple "worst-case" scenarios, I can claim with the utmost confidence that this system would bring only benefits to those who participate. Allow me now, if you will, to outline the intricacies of these self-help forums. The beginning of said meetings will be denoted by the incessant tolling of the end-of-the-day school bell each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoon. Those suspected of provoking ridicule are to be plucked from the bowels of Geekdom, and placed upon a stage before a massive assembly of their peers. Physical restraints, of course, will be a necessity, but remembering that the group in question has been rounded up specifically for their lack of physical prowess, a simple set of iron shackles should, to be sure, prove more than adequate. After being securely fastened in position, the frail practitioners of Dorkery from every corner of this great nation shall be subjected to a barrage of constructive criticisms from their betters. Referring again to my colleague of great renown in this field, I am assured that said suggestions must be offered to the bespectacled chain gang in the form of obscenely cacophonous and simultaneous yelling, with a liberal use of expletives for added effect.

I maintain that the advantages of this program are both herculean in magnitude and saintly in virtue. Considering the fact that these self-help seminars are to be held thrice weekly, and taking into further consideration the fact that a school year contains, on average, approximately thirty-two weeks, I beg of thee to consider further still the potential benefits of exposing the bookish and frail to no less than ninety-six torrents of screeched positive reinforcement per annum. Would we not see an increase in student physical activity, as the nebbish community tries in vain to reach the anatomical perfection demanded by their harassers? Would the meetings not serve as a boon to our economy, as know-it-alls, introverts, and effeminate lads of all ages flock in great herds to our shopping centers, desperate to buy the name brands that their peers have deemed to be the epitome of modern fashion? Would children not have newfound free time to spend with their families, having given up homework at the risk of earning grades excessively high that might threaten the self-esteem of their bullies? Would the school lasses not have a larger pool of potential suitors from which to choose, as more and more exit the realm of the weak by heeding the advice of the strong? Would the Lord not smile just a bit brighter upon these United States, as the thoughtful one by one exchange their heretical science texts for such symbols of classic Americana as a football, or a short-frocked hussy? Finally, coming to the end to which all of this is a means, would these misanthropic over-achievers, so radically changed from the sensitive peer counseling, not begin to eliminate bullying altogether, as the bullies themselves see a likeness in their victims? Aye, as the student body of an entire nation converges upon one singular manner of dress, colloquialisms, behavior, thought, and (albeit low) level of academic performance, the once-ubiquitous bullying issue becomes obsolete. In this new population comprised entirely of lions and not of lambs, the fires of hostility in our schools have been successfully quelled by identifying the bullied, not the bullies, as the true heart of the problem.

As I push on through the Bible Belt of this great nation on my lecture circuit, some concerns have been raised about my proposal that I would at this time like to put forth into the open for clarification. Among the most common criticisms of my idea is that the implementation of stricter anti-bullying policies in our schools would prove both more effective and efficient than my plan. Another common critique of my proposition is that it is "inhumane" and "immoral" to pressure defenseless students into taking malicious bullying as legitimate life advice which one should heed, and that in fact the inherent social problem lies with the bully, not the bullied. A third, even more radical faction has proposed

the teaching of compassion and acceptance to transcend petty cliques and social hierarchies, so as to eliminate bullying with love-based tactics, rather than fear-based ones. To the public, in response to these preposterous allegations, I believe the counterargument nearly writes itself. These bleeding-heart liberals, many of them known members of the Keep America Godless and Socialist Coalition, others affiliated with the Pete Seeger/Che Guevara Brotherhood, who so blatantly promote the Communist ideal of basic human decency, question the very principles on which this nation was founded.

Having discredited the insane counterpoints being made against my (I daresay) ingenious social engineering blueprint, I would now like to address the ludicrous claim that I am, in some way, profiting or benefiting from this plan. Regarding finances, I wish to make it explicitly clear that I hold stock neither in American Outfitters nor Abercrombie & Fitch, nor any other retailer that may profit from the increased purchases of logo-raped shirts, resulting from the new power of the bully to govern the wardrobe of the bullied. I would also like to set the record straight concerning any benefit I may receive from having a child of my own in the American school system. Unfortunately, years of prolonged meth use combined with a trauma-induced distended scrotum has denied me of the ability to procreate, and no current or subsequent children of mine will reap the rewards of my proposal. Thus, having cleared my good name and proved that my motives for this proposition are none other than an unbridled and jingoistic love for this country and its schoolchildren, I may rest assured that this brief missive has both informed and inspired the masses to rise up in support of this most demure proposition.

Arthur Bird Predicts Hampshire College in 1899

Vegetarians in 1999 were more emphatic in their views than their brethren of 1899.

**Vegetarians
Refuse to
Wear Shoes.**

They still enjoyed peanut sandwiches, fried egg-plant steak, health crackers, nut biscuits, spiced beans and other delicacies dear to the hearts of those who have foresworn eating the flesh of “suffering, sentient things.” In 1999 vegetarians refused to wear leather shoes. It came hard at first but shoes had to be sacrificed to principle.

Submitted by Jonathan Gardner

SECTION



Layout by Devin Morse



10 Reasons Why I Don't Give a Shit about the Social Justice Bullshit that goes on at Hampshire (except I do, but quietly, moderately, and in a way that I don't bother others)

by Lauren Fraser and Patrick Skarupa

1. I'm Div III
2. I'm Div III
3. I have better, more important things to care about than over-talked about issues that won't affect me at this point in time.. also, you keep using these words (like "checking privilege"). I do not think they mean what you think they mean.
4. I'm Div III..also, APATHY
5. Despite my mother's wishes that I become a Radical, Black Feminist, my father is a Troll who made so many off-color jokes (pun so gloriously intended that you have no idea how proud I am of myself for just making it) that nothing bothers me the way most people assume that it should.

(continued by Pat because I remembered that I'M DIV-FUCKING-III)

6. Did she mention that she's Div III?
7. When it comes right down to it, I really don't give a damn about most things. This is not to say that I am uncaring and/or ignorant of the issues around me, but there are certain lines. When one considers the fact that most issues on this campus are not brought up in the appropriate manner or just not dealt with in the appropriate manner, one can see that the way things are dealt with can be laughable at best.
8. When reading publications such as the Omen, and caring about aspects of social justice or the sanity of the human race, one may find themselves bleeding from the skull after finding that one gem of an article in each issue of the Omen, reading it, and then proceeding to bash their head against the desk until reaching a state of unconsciousness.
9. Despite the fact that the Omen is a publication that a majority of this campus reads, one has to realize something: a large percentage of what is published are either works of satire or just plain silly. With this in mind, who in their Sam-Hill-fucking-right-mind can consider submitting to the Omen without the realization that there is a 75%-86% chance that what they submit will either be taken in the wrong context or blown out of proportion with possible disastrous results.

10. PUPPIES

P.S.

11. Welcome to Hampshire..where nothing is actually made up, but nothing still matters. 🐶

This short essay deals primarily with the phrase “social justice.” Let’s start with a deconstruction of the phrase, social and justice. (Well that was easy.) Justice is a big complex philosophical matter, but it is more readily defined than “social.” One can formulate a position on economic justice for example into numeric terms, and compare them to others and decide who to seek alliances with. But what about justice that is social? This brings in every aspect of human interaction. It is not easily reduced to numbers and percents.

Could social justice be an ideology? If so, what are it’s politics? It has none.

One defense to such a poorly defined term would be it’s use as a signifier for an (informal) political alliance. However, this term does not exclude anything. Of what use can an alliance that includes everyone with an opinion be if you have the right one! The term does not exclude groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood (Who says it is for social justice) or the Republican Party (They don’t claim this but very well could, from their ideological stance they clearly want an improved society that is just to them.). So the only commonality between those who use the term social justice is that they generally dislike the status quo for some reason (not necessarily your viewpoint.)

[Non-radicals stop reading here.]

Social Justice does not explicitly exclude capitalism, racism, ablism, etc. You must list each and every grievance every time. This is because most users of this term are seeking rights recognized by an authority, not a rejection of all forms of oppression, unlike third wave-feminists. What does the radical share with these neoliberals who seek only to allow “all people” to participate in our patriarchal, racist,



capitalist society? This is where the informal alliance gets very dangerous. Reactionaries and neoliberals can easily identify with struggles that are devoid of anti-capitalist, anti-state, anti-classist (etc) action and rhetoric. There is no radical left conspiracy to use these liberal reformers to accomplish our goals. It almost inevitably devolves into electoralist politics, fighting for the most meager policy changes, far from the “human rights” angle that this alliance is allegedly made on (outside of the term social justice).

Let us stop to mourn the fact that minarchists (or classical liberals) stole the term libertarian in American and, more generally, English usage. Total freedom will never sound so good. What stops capitalist forces from embarking on the same mission with “social justice?”

See Also: <http://www.leftbusinessobserver.com/Antiracism.html> - Adolph Reed Jr



Dear Ella,

Every day you make me thank the lord I'm not a Mt. Holyoke student. Every day you make me consider dropping this course just because of you. I don't know a piece of software so horrible could ever have been designed. You make Moodle look perfect.

I thought it was funny, at first, how you forced poor professors to design their own websites from scratch, resulting in hilariously geocities-esque catastrophes. But you've been interfering with my ability to do work for this course and I fucking hate you.

First, you took five days just to give me access to the website. Then, when you finally gave me an account, it wasn't enrolled in any courses! By the time I could actually get to my course materials I had fallen behind so far!

Then, after only one class where I actually had the ability to review the materials and be at the level of everyone else in class, you crash! Two days of server errors! This assignment is due on Monday and I can't do it if you don't give me the materials!

Now, today, after you woke back up again from your drunken stupor, you seem to have a fucking hangover. I can look at the course website, fantastic, but when I try to click the link to actually get to the course materials?! HTTP ERROR 403 ACCESS IS NOT AUTHORIZED!!!!!!!!!!
FUUCCCCCKKK YOOOUUU ELLLA

What kind of name even IS that?! Your own banner proclaims your name to stand for "Electronic Learning Area" that's only three words! Fucking four letter acronym?! Is the first L from eElectronic?! That is horrible! I bet if you were Ellen (ELectronic Learning Environment Network) you would be a lot cooler. Ellen DeGeneres would never sabotage my attempts to learn German. Ellen DeGeneres would give me my course materials and make funny jokes too.

What I'm saying is that Mt. Holyoke needs to put you down, Ella, like an old dog. Get a brand new Moodle puppy that brings me my course materials like warm slippers in the morning. That puts all the materials in an easy to find chronological order. Yes, please.

Now excuse me while I write a letter to my professor explaining why, ONE AGAIN, I will not have done my homework assignments on time because SOMEONE was a poorly written piece of software on an unstable server with extremely slow processing power.

Sincerely,
Jesse Ide 🐼

Dear Folks by Nathan Anecone

I am deeply sorry if what I have sent into the Omen hurt anybody. I am someone who cherishes a sense of well being in general and would never deliberately say or do anything to harm anyone for any reason. For some reason I thought it would be a “fun and interesting” learning activity to confront morally charged issues in an informal, laid-back, frank fashion befitting this publication, while still retaining a moderate depth of seriousness. I thought it would be neat to reflect on topics of privilege and oppression for one reason or another and this entailed a focus on negativity. I could share with you much positivity as well, even if the “feeling concoction” so far has been more negative. I viewed thinking about connotatively negative social issues (crudely summarized by words like “racism” “sexism” etc) as a kind of endurance training, even though they have large amounts of unpleasant associations that are hard to dwell upon. Believe it or not, I am seeking to be more connected and engaged with the community, even if awkwardness lead me to express things in a haphazard way that may have yielded the shabby utility product of both hurting feelings (awful!) and making myself look like a mean jerk (bad bad bad!). I don’t have any particular talent for addressing these extremely charged topics, at least when what I have to say is displayed publicly. It was my belief that the best thing to do, in being authentically moral about these topics, was to present my muddled conscience on an open venue. I thought the Omen magazine at Hampshire College was a good fit, because the magazine is a free speech publication and the school has a custom to discuss topics of this nature in a variety of forms. I ended up going about it in a rough and tumble manner that was not very flattering. I thought that just throwing myself into these topics using this venue would be means to explore unfamiliar territory. In doing so I got lost in a swamp of challenging and troubling dilemmas that I struggled to cope with and shape. I found myself confronting ethical conundrums which I am unable to resolve, but thought it would be wonderful to attempt to resolve, at the very least in my own head. They never were a problem until I started thinking about them, which says something. I had every intention to be pro-social and to help stimulate the expansion of dialogue and knowledge, but my method was to reveal my own conscience openly, even with the rough edges, even if it meant depicting distasteful ideas, while at the same time suppressing my own ethical valuations as much possible to conserve a fair amount of analytical neutrality. I want to have a better grasp of how social systems work in the

abstract but at the same time recognize that there are sensitive human beings out there with real feelings. An inadvertent product might have been disrespect. In one way or another I was testing myself, with the aim of becoming a more sincere and wise person, but I might have gone about it waywardly.

I am not a political person, at least at the time of this writing, in terms of active (not to say intellectual,) involvement, and it shows in how detached my analytical thoughts can be about issues that are very near and dear to people’s souls. Trying to square an analytical mentality with moral emotions such as justice and fairness is extraordinarily difficult. In writing this content, I had been in those moments detachedly analytic on topics about which others have strong sensitivities. I have strong sensitivities as well. I have deep personal reasons, for example, to be opposed to homophobia. But at the same time I seek every now and then to cultivate a sense of toughness in dealing with it as part of my moral education. On this and other subjects that came up in the previous piece some people might have had visceral reactions on matters I was considering (at the time) in analytical detachment.

(It doesn’t help the situation that I accidentally sent in the wrong draft last time. The draft I sent in comes off as cold. This slip provides one learning experience among many.)

I wondered why things like oppression exist, feelings personally that the best of possible worlds would contain harmonious coexistence among all sentient beings as best as can be practically managed. But I ended up contemplating many bad things generally, and it got a little bit out of control. I reacted to ideas that are current in the campus ecology in one form or another that I didn’t fully understand, and in a manner that wasn’t directly communicative but privately brooding. Resultantly, misunderstandings multiplied and spread. Hopefully this can be a learning experience for anyone who has taken a moment to consider it.

Good fortune, health and well being to all!





Section Editor Grace Willey

A Context That Makes Me: Alternative Healing

By Justice Erikson – September 25th 2012

note:

Not a current student, but very much part of the Hampshire community. -F.

When I was very young, I lived with my mother. She had been a teen parent to me, and was probably overwhelmed by the choices she had to make every day. She tried to take the route of “normal” with me; I had normal pink backpacks, I went to normal school, and I had normal healthcare. The problem with a normal approach is that I never was a “normal” kid: I wanted to get dirty; I was too smart for my grade, and I had an array of difficult-to-treat health problems.

It was hard for me, but I could not fully process it. I latched onto my father. When I was seven, I moved in with my father and his girlfriend, Kelly. She began to homeschool me that fall, and I was free to learn anything that I pleased.

When I got sick, Kelly would heal me. She had a large box: blue, perfectly organized, and kept well above my reach. There she kept all manner of fantastic herbs that she would combine to fit any ailment. I learned not to ask for medicine and a doctor for bellyaches and runny noses, but to ask for tea. To me she was magical, and I wanted nothing more than to learn how to do this and why it

worked.

My curiosity continued when I began to go to North Star, a resource center for teens that learn like I do. I took numerous classes on herbalism and other natural health topics. I would read book after book about the traditional healing practices of various cultures, how to heal yourself with natural foods, and shamanism. I got a tutor in my third year: we read old anthropological texts, learned and found healing herbs, and he taught me energy healing. I was enthralled and passionate.

I identified energy healing as something that is unique to me as a healer. It's something that comes easily for me, but that I have to work to develop. My ongoing tutorial homework is to gather experience, to find ways of healing in my every day life. This defines my experience of the world. The second major factor of my experience as a healer is herbalism. For me, studying herbalism most commonly looks like spending time in herb gardens. I grow, taste, and study healing herbs all around me. I carry herbs with me wherever I go and offer them to those with migraines, insomnia, sadness, etc. Many of my friends trust

me as a person to go to with minor problems looking for an herbal solution.

My tutor and my father both taught me to be a skeptic with an open mind. I learned how to search for and cite primary sources, look beyond the rigid confines of traditional science and the medical industry, and form my own opinions through science and my own experiences. I began to take an array of courses at the Five Colleges - Clinical Herbalism, Plants and Human Health, and Chemistry. Through Plants and Human Health I learned to write for the scientific community, through Clinical Herbalism I learned to let my intuition be a factor in how I handle plants and patients. The professors for each of these courses have become my mentors; I am going to be an apprentice of Chris Marano's next year. Chris teaches Clinical Herbalism and is a friend of my tutor's. I am finding my definitions as a healer through my teachers and practices, but I never let myself get closed off to any path of healing. An open mind is vital for any holistic healer.

Over these years, I became aware of the branch of medicine called Naturopathy. To put it simply, a Naturopath is a normal physician who also has the skill set of a traditional healer. A Naturopath looks for the most holistic health solution with the least side effects. A Naturopath makes lifestyle suggestions and makes health plans with you, but also knows how to get you more traditional Western medicine when necessary. I decided that I wanted to make it my goal to become a Naturopath - to change people's lives and provide an alternative to Western medicine while also being a respected medical professional.

Naturopathy can address many of the more difficult health problems that we face - I hope to someday help people untangle the web of ailments that they face daily, from little aches and pains to chronic diseases. I may have been a sickly child, but my mother has an even wider array of chronic diseases. These problems have frequently threatened her life. They range from cancer to autoimmune disorders to un-diagnosable fundamental problems with her very state of being. In my childhood, she was frequently prescribed drugs for diseases that she didn't have because her problems were so wide-ranging and indescribable. Mainstream medicine would only treat her symptoms and rarely tried to look at the root causes of her health problems

- something she has come to understand only recently. She has very limited access to any form of healthcare because she is incarcerated. I have frequently worried about her health. What truly surprises me is that she has been able to keep her health problems at bay almost entirely by being mindful and meditating, she learned how to manage her mind in beneficial ways after joining the Buddhist faith in prison. Her unique medical challenges and her bravery in facing them inspires me to become a brilliant and confident doctor: one that has the ability to help someone as complicated as her, whom Western medicine has never really been able to figure out, let alone heal.

When I push myself too hard, I lose track of why I do what I do. I can get caught up in the moment and forget to take care of myself. I see first hand how illness and even disease can spring up from almost nowhere when you forget to care for yourself. Nursing myself back to health from my stress-induced ailments provides a good opportunity for me to learn to care for myself and handle medical issues, but I'm worried that I put too much strain on my already fragile constitution, and the damage that my body experiences could become permanent if I lose myself too much. Self-maintenance is vital to energy work, and without having good energy yourself, you can never energetically heal another person. When my family and friends are sick, I look for ways to help them. This reminds me of my ultimate goal: to change people's lives for the better, and help people live as comfortably as they can. But maybe more importantly, it reminds me to take good care of myself so that I am able to pursue my work in the future.

Much of my life today is centered around my goal of becoming a Naturopath. I am writing this essay to pass a class to get into Hampshire College to study Pre-Med to get into the National College of Natural Medicine to become a Naturopathic Medical Doctor. I am taking Chemistry this semester so that I will understand the fundamental reasons for why our bodies respond the way they do to treatments. In my free time I grow, collect, study, and take herbs so

that one day I will have first hand experience with any herb that I prescribe. I take my health seriously, and I am always looking for another learning experience. My definitions as a healer are always growing and refining again, but I feel hopeful that one day I will be able to hold the tiles of Naturopath, Herbalist, and Energy-Worker proudly.

Why I Committed Facebook Suicide

by Zilong Wang

In the eyes of Facebook, the most important events in my life are: Born — Joined Facebook — Started Using Facebook for Android.

And I can't change this peculiar display of my life's meaning. Upset by Facebook's dictatorship and arrogance, I decided to leave the Empire by committing Facebook suicide — terminating my Facebook Avatar, shutting down my account, and never return. This is probably one of the most liberating things.

Other than the upset, a few other things led to the Facebook suicide.

First, Facebook creates the illusion of communication. Through hyper-connectivity and zero-cost delivery, Facebook invites huge volume of shallow exchange. However, 1000 grains of sand is not worth one piece of gold. Facebook is a sandy beach where we throw sand at each other all day long. But having a full hair of sand does not increase our intelligence or happiness. Instead, it pacifies us by making us FEEL connected, thus reducing the need to make real contact. It provides an easy escape out of the oftentimes stressful human interaction. As the mind seeks the path of least resistance, Facebook gradually squeezes out the share of real human communication.

Second, Facebook exacerbate the ego-centric character of our time. MY Timeline, MY status, MY photos,

MY 1000+ friends... You can "like" it, or "comment" on it, but it's all about me. Facebook is where we narrate our imagined stories, and WE need to hear our own story more than anyone else. Others are not really listening, anyway. Facebook is the best friend of our ego, showering it with attention. We might feel that we get more attention from people on Facebook than in the real world. That's because on Facebook, it takes less than a second to "Like" a status, while in the real world, it takes minutes and a lot of heart to give the person a compliment. In a world already full of inflated ego, the last thing we need is another stage where ego does its wild dances.

Third, Facebook reinforces our existing worldview by limiting the information flow within our friend circle. Most of us are friends with people who share similar beliefs, and we post articles along the same ideological line. That's the only thing we see on our Newsfeed, and our worldview starts to be skewed and self-perpetuating. This would make us more insular and self-righteous.

The randomness of life, traveling, and human interactions could break this closed loop. Even with your frequent contacts on Facebook, when you really sit down and have a deep, soul-searching conversation with the person, you might discover so much intricacy and surprises.

Leaving Facebook is hard. Of course, being the creepy Facebook, it would tell you that if you deactivate your account, none of your friends would ever reach you again. Your whole social life would end!

That didn't happen. To keep in touch with those worth contacting, I made a list of names, and arranged to meet with them one on one, face to face. Life is much better this way.

Dear Signers (and other Hampshire organizers)

Please stop planning everything for Thursday night(s)! Please! I'm begging you! Fucking, like, half the student groups meet on Thursdays and including all of the ones I want to go to and most of them are at 7:00pm!

Not to mention that whenever there's a big lecture or performance that's once in a lifetime to see, when you do you put it? Fucking Thursday's and usually at 7pm! Fuck!

Maybe you don't realize what's wrong with this? I'll tell you! I can only be in one place at one fucking time! Yeah! Yeah! See the problem?!

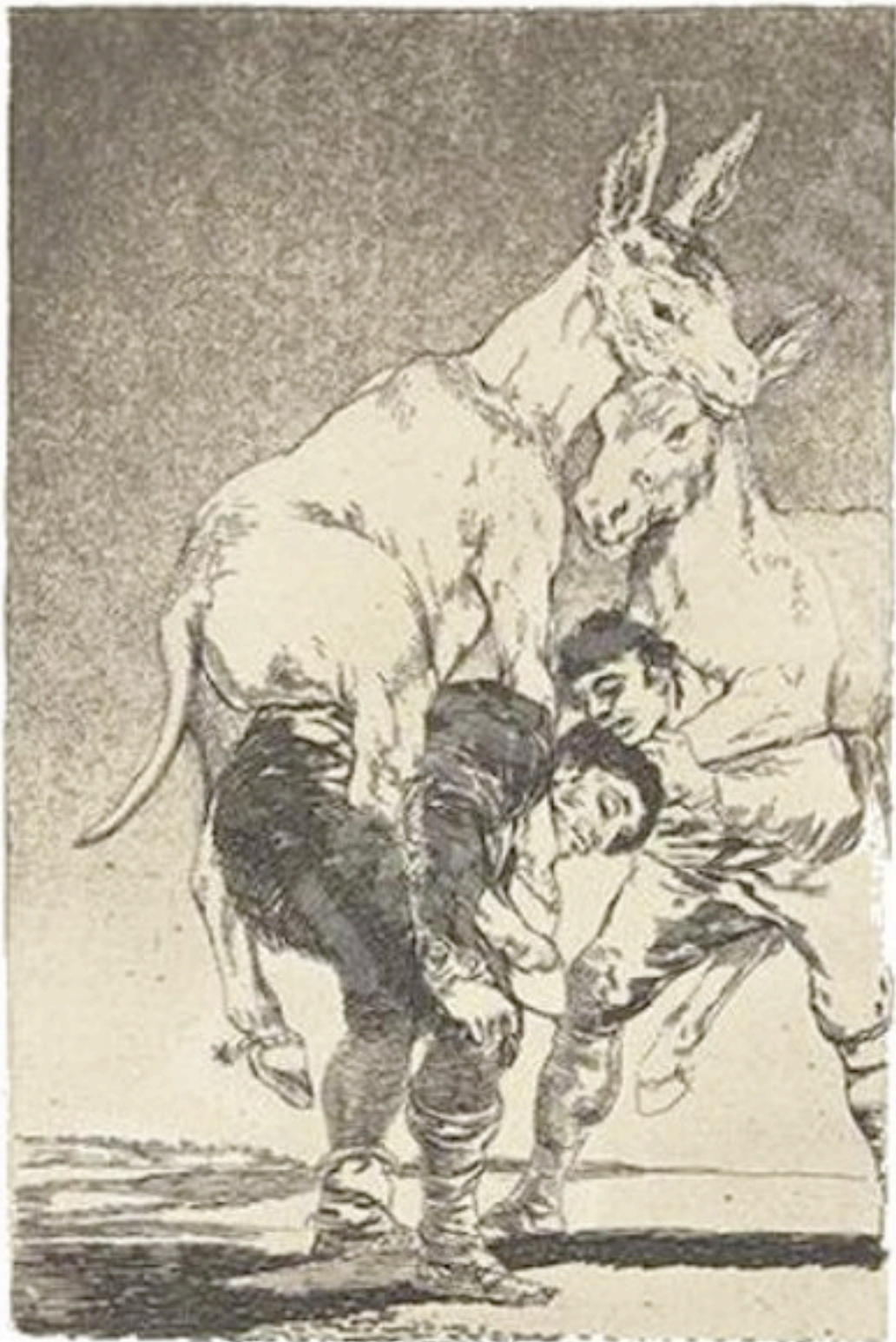
The following is a list of guilty parties: Shake and Bake; Queer Community Alliance, ReRad, ProphMC, The Omen, COCA, COCD, SGA Formation, SJP, Blacksmithing, Glass Collective, The Climax, Not to mention all the cool as fuck events I've had to miss or miss other cool shit for (Kate Bornstein and Penny's Big 21, I'm looking at you.)

There's many more I missed, but those are the big ones!

Please, signers, PLEASE. Put shit on Fridays, and Saturdays, and Sundays, and every other day! People aren't going to be partying yet at 7pm on a Friday and they definitely aren't doing their homework yet. Stop clumping all your shit together and trying to compete for that coveted Thursday at 7 spot. When you do that, we all lose.

With pleading puppy dog eyes,
Jesse Ide

(Sent from an iPod, sorry for typos)



Hey Omeneers! Let's have a bi weekly caption contest! Winner get's their name in the Omen! Woah, slow down there; you gotta win first champ. So here's our first picture by Francisco Goya. Send your captions to

OMEN@HAMPSHIRE.EDU

Will "Two Page Spread" Shattuc

Self-declared prince of sovereign principality of Sealand dies aged 91

Paddy Roy Bates proclaimed offshore fort where he lived a principality after moving there in 1960s
from The Guardian (theguardian.co.uk), Wednesday 10 October 2012 17.18 EDT

Paddy Roy Bates, who occupied an abandoned fort in the North Sea and declared it the sovereign Principality of Sealand with himself as its prince, has died aged 91, his son said on Wednesday.

Michael Bates said his father died on Tuesday at a care home in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. He had been suffering from Alzheimer's.

In the 1960s, inspired by the "pirate radio" movement, Bates set up Radio Essex on an offshore fort. When that was closed down, he moved in 1966 to Fort Roughs, a disused second world war platform in international waters about seven miles off the coast.

Michael Bates said his father initially intended to set up another radio station, but then "had the bizarre idea of declaring independence".

Rejecting a British order to leave, he proclaimed the fort the Principality of Sealand, declaring himself Prince Roy and his wife, Joan, as princess.

The 550-square-metre (5,920-square-foot) fort two concrete towers connected by an iron platform claimed to be the world's smallest sovereign state, though it was not internationally recognized.

Since an initial attempt to reclaim the fort was rejected by an English court, Britain has largely ignored the breakaway platform.

Despite the lack of legal status, Bates gave Sealand its own constitution, red, white and black flag, passports, stamps, coins, national anthem and a motto, E Mare Libertas: "From the sea, freedom".

Today, Sealand makes money by selling aristocratic titles and hosting Internet servers.

"I might die young or I might die old, but I will never die of boredom," Bates said in a 1980s interview.

According to Sealand's official website, Bates fought in the Spanish civil war and worked at Smithfield meat market in central London before joining the British army during the second world war, serving in North Africa, the Middle East and Italy.

After the war, he imported meat from Ireland to northern England, where rationing was still in effect, imported rubber from Malaysia and ran fishing boats off Britain's east coast before founding Sealand.

In his old age, Bates moved to the mainland, making his son, Michael, regent and head of state of Sealand.

Michael Bates remembered his father as a "huge, huge character".

"How many people do you know that are discussed by governments and prime ministers?" he said. "The history is absolutely amazing."

Bates is survived by Joan, Michael and his daughter Penny.



MAIL CALL: Edited by F. Stewart-Taylor

Hey Omenati- So we got this pure, glorious piece of work sent in for this issue, and it says most of what I wanted to say about the "About Privilege" debacle. I was going to write a similar piece, but the lack of "testosterone for improved concentration and drive" really makes it hard to give a shit about educating sexists. Thanks, Kÿra. You're doing the Lord's work. I added the italics for clarity, which was a struggle given that I lack the extra muscle mass which would make typing so much easier, but we do our best with what we have. Thanks again, and please keep sending in your submissions, whatever your stance on The Issues or particular Omen issues is.

Love,

F. Stewart-Taylor

About Privilege Nathan R. Anecone

Re: About Privilege Kÿra

Many people who profess to come from an underprivileged background on campus array themselves in debate against the system of preferential treatment which they seem to see acting everywhere, at all stages of being like some ether or light. Everywhere, I see mention of white privilege, male privilege, this privilege, that privilege and, being both male and white, I wonder why I am not yet King of France.

This is just embarrassing. Even as a hyperbole, this just makes you sound incredibly pretentious and goes against your own argument. Not every man is going to be president of the United States, but every President we've had has been a man (and all but one has been white).

There are only so many corporate executives who control our businesses and economies, only so many politicians who write the laws which are used to govern us, only so many police officers who enforce the law at their discretion, and there is a reason these positions are dominated by able-bodied, white, cisgendered, straight men. You think it's because they all earned it or deserve it more? These are the people who write the stories that silently dictate every aspect of our society. Power in society comes from many places, and those places are dominated by certain groups. It is not a mystical ether; it's oppression. To ignore and mock the huge inequalities between different races and genders is a pretty gross display of arrogance.

What I want to expose in this brief essay is the hidden, dubiously ignorant double standard belying the assumption of someone else's privilege, because I am

occasionally offended by the stares I receive walking around campus, and feel it necessary to correct a grave misapprehension.

Have you actually read up on privilege at all, or have you just you just clung to your own righteousness when people who try to call you out?

The only grave misapprehension is that you deserve to whine and whine about people judging you while people who are actually facing systematic and institutional oppression here at Hampshire are still being ignored.

If you don't know anything about some him or her, it is as much a fallacy to presume that, because he is white, has blond hair, and had ancestors living here for x many generations instead of y, that he must enjoy some special and revered status. I want to explode this whole conception.

This is some hardcore pseudo-logic. If a society is racist, then a person of the favored race will enjoy privileges that marginalized groups will not. Your argument depends on one or both of the following absurdities: that there is no widespread racism, sexism, or other forms of oppression, or that racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression don't actually make a difference in the way people are treated. Apparently, you don't even know what privilege is. That's okay (well, not really), because you can learn.

The error in the concept of "white privilege" lies in the fact that historically, many ostensibly white ethnicities in America were at some point actively discriminated against, and although it was not for the color of their skin, their whiteness offered them no protection.

Are you saying that's just as true and relevant today? "Hey, some of

us white people have been discriminated against in the past by other white people and we moved on, it must be the same for everyone else!"

I am of primarily Irish and Italian descent, two ethnic derivations that at one point—and in certain respects still do, have a hard time getting by in the U.S. I was never racially abused for being Irish or Italian, but still, like Native Americans, I see images of Irishness corrupted by sports logos—the Celtic's Fighting Irish emblem, for example, which is a picture of a scrunched-faced, stout, curly-haired redhead in a fisticuffs posture; and find my Italianness depreciated by pop culture icons of thuggish mob bosses and belligerent Jersey shore guidos.

And you think this is just as pervasive and with the same effects as caricatures depicted of other ethnicities?

If I am privileged for being white, I really don't know what the perks are.

Would you like a list? There are lots of them. Read this list:

"White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" by Peggy McIntosh

<http://www.amptoons.com/blog/files/mcintosh.html#daily>

Maybe it is a property of privilege that it remains invisible for those who possess it.

This would have been the first thing you would have learned about privilege if you ever cared to actually read anything about it. Yes, it's invisible to those who have it unless they look for it in the experiences of those who don't. You don't notice that institutions make rules that are much easier for you to follow (or get away with breaking) than other people for the same reason that you don't notice that the band-aids at the store come in your skin color and not somebody else's.

I've lived all my adult years in Lowell Massachusetts, an old industrial town with a large population of people of color. Caribbean Hispanics make up about a quarter of the population, and rarely does a day pass by where I don't interact with a Cambodian, as Lowell has the second largest Cambodian concentration in the U.S. after Long Beach California. I certainly dealt with racial tensions in my experience. It's hard being one of three whiteboys in your neighborhood. Sometimes I will be

sitting on my porch and a Latino male will make some kind of taunting gesture, as though the modest house I sit in front of is some kind of grandiose palace and I am carrying a whip tied to my belt. Sometimes I feel like the misfit, the outcast, the freak. Perhaps this is some ancestral karmic justice—yet it was not my Irish or Italian immigrant forefathers who kept slaves or invaded the sovereign lands of native peoples. They farmed and made shoes and dropped out of middle school to help pay the rent.

Fortunately for you, you don't live in a little bubble where your area of Lowell, Massachusetts is the whole world. In fact, Lowell, Massachusetts is part of a much larger society in which you will have a much much easier time rising to positions of greater power than the vast majority of the people of color in your town. Yes, because of your race. You seem to be confusing prejudice with oppression. Oppression is prejudice plus power. The fact that you were taunted in your youth for being white doesn't hold a candle to greater systemic oppression.

Perhaps my lack of significant economic advantage negates any of the privilege of being white.

Your various privileges and disadvantages do not add up and cancel out like points. They interact in ways that can't be categorized. You can't just weigh the disadvantages associated with different forms of oppression against each other.

Classism is a form of oppression, and those experiences are legitimate, but you don't have the lived experiences of anyone but yourself.

My parents work every day of their life, and if they stopped working they would be out on the streets in less than a month. Many of the poorer white kids I grew up with often groped for an identity in minority subculture, dressing "black", listening to hip-hop, skipping class where false history was being taught. I've always felt a certain kinship for the downtrodden.

Thank you, thank you, oh noble white knight. It's so nice to see you act like you know and understand the experiences of people of color and women when you yourself have only viewed racism or sexism through a lens of whiteness and maleness. All the oppressed peoples have hoped you felt a kinship with them.

It is a twisted turn of perception to see the absence of discrimination to be a sign of privilege itself. For the most part that's all I can claim to have enjoyed of my

whiteness.

Actually, that's exactly what privilege is.

You should try to educate yourself before getting defensive and calling everyone else ignorant. If huge groups of people suffer unfair treatment and disadvantages because they are not of the dominant identity group, then those who are treated better because they are of that group are privileged. If you are not disadvantaged by the incredible forces that oppressed groups are, then that is an advantage you have over all those people which you did not earn, you were merely born into. Let me lay it out straight for you so that the logic doesn't go over your head this time: A preference against a group of people is a preference for another. If you don't realize the incredible inequalities in the way society treats different groups and that this is a huge injustice, that's because you're privileged: it doesn't benefit you to care or hurt you if you don't.

It's beautiful that you don't experience racism or sexism like other people do, but it also makes you blind to other people's suffering (and the ways you are complacent or participating in it). Don't get huffy because people who have experienced this their whole lives (or people who are allies to those that have) call you out on it.

The cops have been as much of a bunch of dicks to me and mine than they have with minorities, owing, perhaps to my slight (although not overwhelming, mind you) economic disadvantage.

Really? You have measured that they are equally forceful with you as to people of color? You must be an expert on other people's experiences then! Who do you think cops arrest, assault, and murder more often? White kids, or people of color? According to compiled reports for 1996 and 1997 revealed that almost 90% of persons shot by NYPD officers were either black or hispanic. After that, they stopped releasing racial statistics.

About being male: I suppose there is something privileged about being born with all the physical advantages of the male anatomy and physiology, but lord it over anyone I do not. Sure, the extra muscle mass, testosterone for improved concentration and drive, and never having to fear brutal rape except in prison confers a nice state of mind.

Even if you didn't believe that men are biologically superior, just by being male in this society, you do in fact lord your masculinity against women and genderqueer folks. You inherently are given

more physical space and airtime in classrooms, workplaces, ect. You just don't notice, and when you do, if ever, you probably don't think it has anything to do with your gender.

I've been fortunate to have the body that I do; it suits me perfectly, and I am the beneficiary of fairly good health in my young age. I can't deny this: that fate has been agreeable with me in the determination of my biological sex. But socially, I don't think I've won out too much for being male. In fact I've found the society around me to be at times savage and pitiless, living in the inner city.

Just because you have had some tough times, doesn't mean that everyone's tough times are comparable and all the same. It doesn't invalidate other people's experiences, but it does make you sound whiny and privileged.

I'm awkward. I'm no good at sports, except soccer. My mother and father, at least, would have treated me like a princess if I were born female, and not a workhorse or prospect for their own future economic security.

Again, stop trying to gain sympathy for white boy problems. This is a clear example of sexism.

No doubt I do not suffer the indignation of being objectified as females do, but again, it is a twisted form of privilege for it to be defined as the absence of discrimination.

What the hell are you talking about? You keep saying this over and over:

Yes, people of color and women have to face racism and sexism

Just because I don't have to face racism and sexism, people assume that I am privileged!

It is a privilege, and unfair, that people face oppression based on their race or gender or any other nonsense and that other people don't even recognize the disadvantages they face. How is it possible for you to ramble and whine about this at such length?

Regarding sexuality: being bisexual, I can't say I've won any lotteries in the heteronormative superstructure of the politicians and churches. So scratch that one out.

You say that like your experiences being bisexual somehow make

you exempt from possibly having any sort of privilege.

All that I am saying is that the advocates of privilege awareness on campus and at large unwittingly perpetuate the cycle of stereotyping they so fiercely denounce by staring down that white, broad-shouldered male they mistake for their oppressor.

I don't know what you're talking about. You have not been stereotyped. By writing this article and publishing it, you have fit into a stereotype of whiny white cisgendered male who doesn't actually care about issues of race or gender and only wants people to stop calling him out. People don't assume they know you, but people can pretty safely assume you don't know them, and this proves it.

Hopefully this adds to the discussion. I am not one to detract from a noble cause. I support the struggles of minority ethnics and feminists, seeing the beauty and purpose of poetry in what they do, if their argument is rational and well-argued, and their grievances legitimate.

Yeah, if their argument is rational by your faulty, biased, and defensive logic. It's so nice that you can appreciate the beauty of other people's struggles.

Let us not engender more failures to communicate in our tears of passion and confusion.

Because instead of having a real dialogue in which you actually try to learn about privilege, you just ignore that and decide to write an omen article telling everyone that they are wrong and you are right.

Let us be friends.

Telling people "you're wrong, you're unreasonable, and I refuse to acknowledge your experiences, but lets be friends" does not make you the nice and reasonable person here. It shows that you are ignorant and unwilling to recognize anyone but yourself. People who are oppressed do not owe oppressors diplomacy. Peasants do not owe kings letters of dissatisfaction, nor would it help disrupt the imbalance of power. So forget friendship for now. Let us call others out on being oppressive and failing to realize their privilege so that we do not stand idly by while the people around us participate in the marginalization of already disadvantaged people.

I believe the fundamental unit of society to be the individual—the human agent. This comes first, prior to any class, gender, ethnic, or status identifiers. I merely want to suggest that this become our standard of reference by which we evaluate the behavior and character of others.

Pretending oppression doesn't exist doesn't make it go away. There's a reason places with more individualistic believers tend to be much more racist and sexist.

Enough with your biological excuses, false rationality, and smarmy respectfulness. If you get over being another boring white cismale who doesn't like hearing about racism or sexism, there's some really introductory level stuff you can read. You can go to this link to start and there's plenty more if you make it through this: "Check my what?" On privilege and what we can do about it

http://blog.shrub.com/archives/tekanji/2006-03-08_146

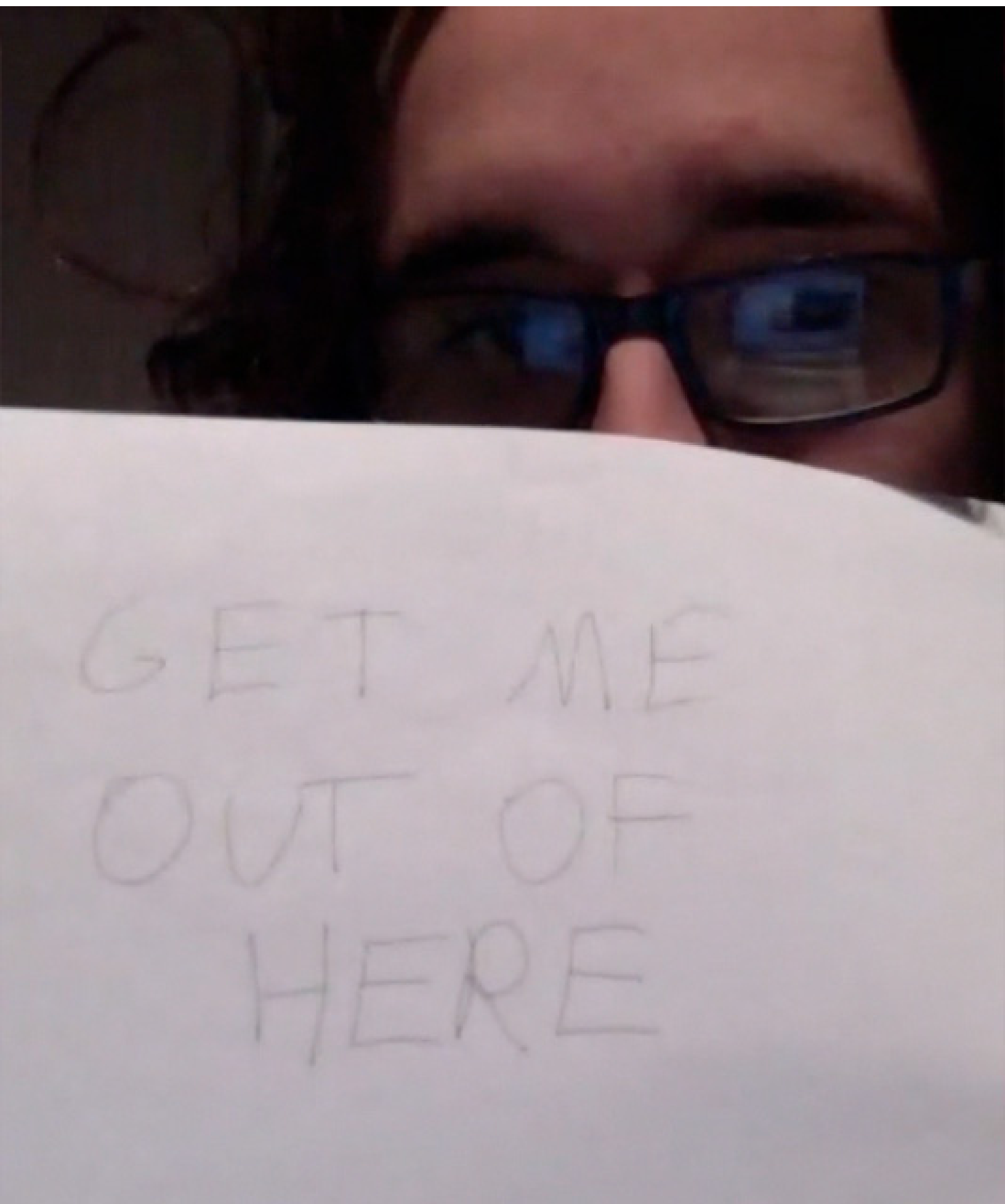
Peace, NRA

Signed, Someone who tries to actually check their privilege.



Pinup by "Honey Badger Don't-Give-a"
F. Stewart-Taylor

Last known transmission of former Omen editor Evan J. Silberman



Keep an eye out, True Believers.